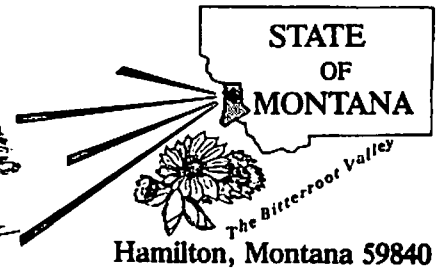
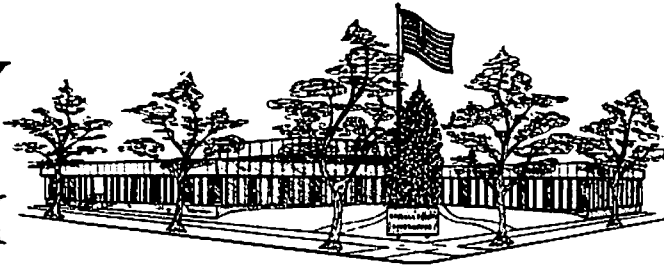


COUNTY OF RAVALLI



**Ravalli County Commissioners
215 South 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840**

June 10, 2008

Floyd A. Dockum
Helena Flight Standards District Office
2725 Skyway Drive, Suite 1
Helena, MT 59602

Dear Mr. Dockum,

The Ravalli County Airport Advisory Board has been in contact with Ed Warmoth since December of 2007 asking for help in promoting our "noise abatement traffic pattern" for Ravalli County. Ed suggested an FAA safety meeting for all pilots and instructor pilots based at Ravalli County.

Our problem: The local flight school is teaching two and three mile final approaches and very wide down winds. Naturally, this results in long, low finals. We have received numerous complaints from people living south of runway 34 of very low flying aircraft and the associated noise. We have talked with the chief instructor of this flight school, Cliff Walters, without result. His comments in the past have been, "This is the way I flew patterns in California" and "Your noise abatement pattern is unsafe." Secondly, because of these long finals, other pilots are turning in front of these "long final aircraft". To date, we have not had any of the school instructors attend any local pilots' meetings, and I doubt an FAA Safety meeting will be attended by the instructors, but it will be of great benefit to the rest of the valley pilots.

Ed Warmoth said if Ravalli County implemented this noise abatement pattern, the students would have to demonstrate their ability to fly the pattern to the flight examiner to pass their check ride. We have not found this to be the case. We do not want student pilots to fail their check rides because of something they were not taught.

We have asked Ed if he would fly with the flight instructors of this school to demonstrate this pattern is safe and efficient.

Fire season is almost upon us. Associated with fire season is smoke and reduced visibility. The practice of turning in front of a long final aircraft either deliberately or

unintentionally is more conducive to a mid-air collision. Single engine air tankers (SEAT) fly numerous fire missions. They do not fly long finals but in fact do fly our noise abatement pattern and did before it was even published.

We are asking for some help from the FAA to alleviate the glaring potential for a mid-air collision.

Another problem especially during fire season is the local skydiving club. They continue to jump during fire season at Ravalli County Airport with reduced visibility and numerous helicopter and SEAT base operations. Dean Bitterman, the Forest Service flight coordinator has actually had to shut down his emergency fire fighting operation because of safety concerns involving the skydivers. The skydiver spokesman, Mark Fournier, has threatened filing a complaint with the FAA if Ravalli County suspends their skydiving operations during these critical periods. Can Ravalli County legally suspend skydiving operations for reasons of safety?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carlotta Grandstaff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'C' and a long, sweeping underline.

Carlotta Grandstaff
Chairman of Ravalli County Commissioners